

CONGRESSMEN WHO WILLFULLY... SHOULD BE
PUNISHED BY THE PEOPLE.

DEWEY 6A

SPURIOUS QUOTATIONS

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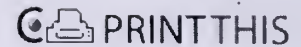
Abraham Lincoln Quotations & Sayings

Spurious

“Congressmen...Should be
Arrested, Exiled, or Hanged”

Excerpts from newspapers and other sources

From the files of the
Lincoln Financial Foundation Collection



'Wash Times' Columnist Uses Fabricated Abraham Lincoln Quote

By E&P Staff

Published: February 14, 2007 9:00 AM ET

NEW YORK The drive by some political and military figures -- and pundits -- to paint those who oppose the war in Iraq as traitors or at least not supporting the troops has hit another low, with a Washington Times columnist trumpeting an incendiary quote from Abraham Lincoln shown to be a fabrication last year.

Frank Gaffney, Jr. opened his latest column with this: "Congressmen who willfully take actions during wartime that damage morale and undermine the military are saboteurs and should be arrested, exiled, or hanged." — President Abraham Lincoln.

He continues: "It is, of course, unimaginable that the penalties proposed by one of our most admired presidents for the crime of dividing America in the face of the enemy would be contemplated — let alone applied — today. Still, as the U.S. House of Representatives and Senate engage in interminable debate about resolutions whose effects can only be to 'damage morale and undermine the military' while emboldening our enemies, it is time to reflect on what constitutes inappropriate behavior in time of war."

One problem: Lincoln never said it.

Brooks Jackson at FactCheck.org, the Annenberg Public Policy Center group, studied the sudden appearance of the quote last August. Why? He had found that his Web search "brought up more than 18,000 references to it."

He reported: "Supporters of President Bush and the war in Iraq often quote Abraham Lincoln as saying members of Congress who act to damage military morale in wartime 'are saboteurs, and should be arrested, exiled or hanged.'"

"Republican candidate Diana Irey used the 'quote' recently in her campaign against Democratic Rep. John Murtha of Pennsylvania, and it has appeared thousands of times on the Internet, in newspaper articles and letters to the editor, and in Republican speeches.

"But Lincoln never said that. The conservative author who touched off the misquotation frenzy, J. Michael Waller, concedes that the words are his, not Lincoln's. Waller says he never meant to put quote marks around them, and blames an editor [at the magazine Insight] for the mistake and the failure to correct it. We also note other serious historical errors in the Waller article containing the bogus quote."

Jackson later provided this update: "Candidate Irey retracted the quote and apologized hours after this article appeared."

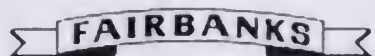
Waller wrote to Jackson concerning the 2003 article: "Oddly, you are the first to question me about this. I'm surprised it has been repeated as often as you say. My editors at the time didn't think it was necessary to run a correction in the following issue of the magazine, and to my knowledge we received no public comment."

Gaffney is a regular columnist at the Washington Times.

E&P Staff

Links referenced within this article

Find this article at:



Daily News - Miner

Congressional saboteurs? Don Young gives Abraham Lincoln credit where none is due

By Sam Bishop

Published February 16, 2007

WASHINGTON — Rep. Don Young on Thursday added his voice to the speechifying about President Bush's Iraq policy and bolstered it with what he thought was the voice of President Abraham Lincoln.

The man who Young quoted, though, was not the nation's 16th president but a professor at a Washington, D.C., graduate school.

"I'd like to make a quote," Young began after being granted his five minutes on the House floor. "Congressmen who willfully take actions during wartime that damage morale and undermine the military are saboteurs and should be arrested, exiled or hanged."

The quote, Young said, came from Lincoln, "who had the same problem this president had with a very unpopular war, the same problem with people trying to redirect the commander-in-chief."

However, the words Young attributed to Lincoln were written by J. Michael Waller, a professor at the Institute of World Politics. They metamorphosed into the illegitimate Lincoln quote on Dec. 23, 2003, in a column that Waller wrote for Insight, a conservative weekly magazine published by the owners of The Washington Times.

Waller, contacted Thursday afternoon, said a copy editor at the Times put quotes around the words, making them appear to have come from Lincoln.

Waller said he actually wrote the words as a provocative summary of the Lincoln administration's decision to prosecute two men who urged desertion from the Union Army during the Civil War.

The magazine declined to correct the quotation mark error at the time, Waller said.

"I'm obviously really upset that that editing error was never corrected and a lot of people have been fooled by that," Waller said.

The watchdog group FactCheck.org revealed the falsity of the quote on its Web site in August after a congressional candidate used it in her campaign against Pennsylvania Democratic Rep. John Murtha, a prominent critic of Bush's Iraq policy. The quote has appeared thousands of times in print and on the Internet, according to the group's analysis.

Those fooled included Frank Gaffney, president of the Center for Security Policy and an assistant secretary of defense under President Reagan, who writes a column for The Washington Times. On Tuesday, he led his column with the quote. The Times has not yet corrected the error. Gaffney could not be reached Thursday evening.

Meredith Kenny, Young's spokeswoman, said she brought the column to the attention of her boss, who opened his floor speech with it.

Young will not repeat the quote, Kenny said, but stands behind the point he was making.

Hundreds of House members have spent the week delivering five-minute speeches on the Iraq resolution pushed by the Democratic leadership. The two-paragraph resolution states that Congress supports members of the armed forces in Iraq but "disapproves of the decision of President George W. Bush announced on Jan. 10, 2007, to deploy more than 20,000 additional United States combat troops to Iraq."

"I suggest to you this resolution will undermine and cause a morale disruption to our troops," Young said.

Young said the United States has always fought for freedom and is doing so again in Iraq. In the two world wars in which his father and cousins fought, and in the Korean War, "never once did the Congress in that role undermine the military or the commander-in-chief," he said.

"And then we came to Vietnam and we began to fight a war by the media, a war without allowing the troops to do the job as they should have done," he said. "And in fact, we lost that war."

After the United States withdrew from Southeast Asia in 1975, the Khmer Rouge regime in Cambodia slaughtered 2 million citizens, Young said. "People forget that," he said.

"It's a slippery slope down this slide of not being the leaders of this nation for freedom," Young said. "And that's what I thought this country was about — freedom for each individual in this world and in our country."

Waller, the Institute of World Politics professor, said he summarized Lincoln's statements from 1863 not to advocate the execution of people who oppose the Iraq war but to make them reconsider how and where they express their opposition.

"The enemy is listening," he said.

Gaffney, the former assistant defense secretary, made a similar point in his column Tuesday, saying that the resolution's effect "can only be to 'damage morale and undermine the military' while emboldening our enemies."

The majority of Democrats speaking on the House floor in recent days disagreed.

"The administration has attempted two surges in the past. They haven't worked," said Rep. Sander Levin, D-Mich. So how can it embolden the enemy for Congress "to disapprove a strategy that is not working?" Levin asked.

Rep. Silvestre Reyes, D-Texas and chairman of the House Intelligence Committee, read a letter from an Army soldier who described the difficulty created by the constant rotations to Iraq. In five years of marriage, the man wrote, he has been gone three. Stacking deployments on deployments will break even the strongest families, the soldier wrote.

"That's what we're doing to our military, and that's what this resolution is about," Reyes said.

FactCheck.org, in its analysis of Waller's 2003 article, also pointed out several other errors.

Waller said Thursday that he doesn't disagree with the organization's analysis of his factual errors. He said some came from his reliance on contemporary accounts that he had not realized were incorrect.

Waller's article focused on two men that Lincoln's military had prosecuted.

One of Lincoln's generals arrested a former U.S. representative from Ohio for urging desertion. Lincoln, in a famous memo, defended the former congressman's trial and exile by saying "must I shoot a simple-minded soldier boy who deserts, while I must not touch a hair of a wiley agitator who induces him to desert?"

A subsequent memo indicates that Lincoln and his Cabinet thought the arrest unnecessary. “but, being done, all were for seeing you through with it.” according to FactCheck.org.

“We know of no prominent Democrats who are urging troops to go AWOL, making Waller’s parallel a dubious one at best,” the group concluded.

The second man prosecuted by the Union Army was not, as Waller had claimed, another former congressman. The man, a Confederate sympathizer, was sentenced to hang by a military tribunal, but not merely for discouraging enlistment, as Waller had reported, according to FactCheck.org. The man had plotted to free Confederate soldiers from prison and arm them.

The man, who was not hanged, eventually was cleared by the U.S. Supreme Court, which ruled that functioning civil courts could not be bypassed by the military.

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DRAWER 6A

SPURIOUS QUANTITIES

